



News from

# Congressman Ron Kind

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CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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## Kind Bill Would Add Hurricane Katrina Relief Check-off to Federal Tax Form

*Fiscal Impact of Hurricane Katrina Exposes Soft Underbelly of Federal Budget*

**Washington, DC** –U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) announced today that he has introduced bipartisan legislation to allow people eligible for a federal tax refund to donate all or a portion of their tax return to support the ongoing relief and long-term reconstruction efforts in the areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina. The legislation is also sponsored by Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-CT), who is a member of the Ways and Means Committee which oversees federal tax law.

Under the proposal, federal tax forms would include a check-off box in which taxpayers can designate a donation of any amount up to their entire refund to the Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund. The contributions collected would ultimately be transferred to the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, the fundraising effort headed by former Presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton to provide relief and recovery resources for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

“The tragedy of Hurricane Katrina has given way to an overwhelming outpouring of compassion and support from the American people as they look for ways to help the victims,” stated Rep. Kind. “The Hurricane Katrina relief check-off seeks to build on that goodwill by providing charitable citizens with an easy opportunity to contribute to the long-term and expensive project of rebuilding the battered Gulf region.”

In addition to the unprecedented level of private support for Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts, President Bush promised a massive federal investment in the Gulf Coast, but did not provide details about where the money will come from. Facing estimated hurricane disaster costs of \$200 billion or more, the White House has acknowledged that the additional obligation will worsen a federal deficit that was projected at \$333 billion before Hurricane Katrina hit.

“We are facing the most expensive relief and recovery effort in our nation’s history at the same time our government finds itself deep in deficits and largely in debt to foreign lenders such as China,” said Rep. Kind, who is a member of the House Budget Committee. “As the cost estimates of Hurricane Katrina relief climb upward, we really need to think creatively about how we are going to work together to responsibly pay for this disaster, rather than all deficit-financing and leaving a huge legacy of debt for our children and grandchildren.”

(more)

Federal tax forms currently include a check-off box for taxpayers to contribute \$3 to publicly fund Presidential elections. Like the Presidential Election Campaign Fund check-off, contributions to the Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund would be strictly voluntary. The Hurricane Katrina relief check-off deducts from taxpayers' refund amount, whereas the Presidential Election Campaign check-off is a government subsidized contribution that does not decrease one's refund.